

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 002187

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR INR/R/MR; IIP/RW; IIP/RNY; BBG/VOA; IIP/WEU; AF/PA;
EUR/WE /P/SP; D/C (MCCOO); EUR/PA; INR/P; INR/EUC; PM; OSC ISA
FOR ILN; NEA; WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC/WEUROPE; DOC FOR ITA/EUR/FR
AND PASS USTR/PA; USINCEUR FOR PAO; NATO/PA; MOSCOW/PA;
ROME/PA; USVIENNA FOR USDEL OSCE.

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Moussaoui Trial

Nuclear Proliferation Economic Patriotism France: Political
Crisis

PARIS - Tuesday, April 04, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Moussaoui Trial
Nuclear Proliferation
Economic Patriotism
France: Political Crisis

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

"Death Penalty Applicable to Moussaoui" reads Le Figaro's headline, echoed on a front-page sidebar in Liberation: "Moussaoui Could Get Death Penalty. Inside, Le Figaro reports that Moussaoui is "getting closer to the death penalty" while in a separate report entitled "The Frenchman's Trial Sheds New Light on 9/11" one can read: "Khalid Sheik Mohamed's testimony shows how simple Al-Qaeda's means were compared to the cumbersome machine of American bureaucracy." In Liberation Pascal Riche makes it clear that "although Moussaoui could incur the death penalty, the final verdict is not in yet." (See Part C)

Today's lead story continues to be the social crisis over the CPE. Although another day of protest is scheduled for today, commentaries are focusing more on the political fallout of the crisis than on the social repercussions. France Soir headlines: "A Demonstration What For?" But Liberation headlines with a play on word on the CPE: "Corteges Pour un Enterrement" literally translated it reads: "Marches for a Burial" to "urge the right to give up the CPE completely." Meanwhile right-of-center Le Figaro titles: "CPE: The Last Round?" and recalls on its front page that the conflict began January 16. Le Monde carries a poll showing that 71% of the French consider that President Chirac's televised intervention Friday evening on the CPE has "radicalized the movement" and 54% demand that the CPE be withdrawn despite Chirac's proposed modifications. The front page of Le Monde says that since UMP president Sarkozy has decided to take charge of the CPE issue, PM Villepin is de facto "cast aside." For Le Figaro, Chirac is trying to attenuate the "Sarkozy Phenomenon." (See Part C)

Popular right-of-center France Soir announces on its front page: "Electronic Passports Are on Their Way." "After many twists and turns the electronic passports are finally going to be issued in France. But these passports are indeed electronic and not biometric. which will not be available until April 2009. For those who want to travel to the U.S. and who have a passport issued between October 26, 2005 and April 1, 2006, they will have to apply for a new electronic passport and pay 60 or obtain a visa from the American Embassy which is costly and tedious."

In Le Monde Francois Heisbourg (advisor for the Foundation for Strategic Research) pens an op-ed on nuclear proliferation entitled: "The Nuclear Club Must Remain Closed." (See Part C)

Economic news are dominated by the Alcatel-Lucent merger which leads Le Figaro to carry an editorial entitled "Nationality: Citizen of the World" while the EU examines France's "economic patriotism" approach in the context of the new 'Bolkestein directive.' Liberation carries an op-ed on France's economic patriotism which tries to explain "why France sends out an image of a protectionist state with nationalistic tendencies." For Patrick Lamm in Les Echos "the fact that the merger was finalized so quickly is a good sign, even if the mix of cultures raises questions about the future." Like the rest of today's commentators, Lamm writes: "This is a merger that will keep at bay those who accuse France of economic patriotism." (See Part C)

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Moussaoui Trial

"Jury Says Moussaoui Can Be Executed"

Pascal Riche in left-of-center Liberation (04/04): "During the second phase of the trial, the prosecution should have no

problem in making the balance tip in favor of the death penalty. The outcome seems to fit with Moussaoui's death wish and his desire to die as a hero for the cause. It appears that the jury, despite the defense's unheeded caution, has opted for letting him be a martyr."

Nuclear Proliferation

"The Nuclear Club Must Remain Closed."

Francois Heisbourg (advisor for the Foundation for Strategic Research) in left-of-center Le Monde (04/04): "One of three things which have kept at bay nuclear proliferation has been the NPT. But the NPT is threatened at its core by the Iranian crisis. Iran is central, strategically and geographically to the region. If it were to step outside the international system of non-proliferation, it would break the logic of the treaty. Meanwhile, the American-Indian agreement confirms the Bush administration's lack of concern for the multilateral arrangements that provide a framework for the international system."

Economic Patriotism

"Nationality: Citizen of the World"

Gaetan de Capete in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/04): "Is the political class so absorbed with the CPE that it has nothing to say about the Alcatel-Lucent merger? As the future of one of France's major companies is about to be sealed, no one is even wondering about the consequences of such a deal. Forgotten are Danone, Suez and Arcelor. The true feat for the CEO of Alcatel may indeed be that he has achieved a merger between equals without triggering the kind of psychodrama we are so good at. The truth is that the package is a masterwork in diplomacy: the company's head office will be in Paris, the CEO is the daunting Patricia Russo, an American through and through. But what will be the nationality of the new group? The group will probably be a citizen of the world. Serge Tchuruk has in fact invented the stateless company, which espouses the contours of globalization. What this merger does is to ridicule the notion of economic patriotism, first by showing that if it is a worthy deal, sensitive issues can easily be resolved, as is the case with Alcatel's satellites and Lucent's defense activity. The merger is also an example of how to handle political marketing."

"A One Way Street"

Pascal Aubert in right-of-center La Tribune (04/04): "The silence is deafening. No one has piped up about economic patriotism. This indifference leaves one speechless. It is as if in France emotion were a one-way street reserved only for losers. Conquering CEOs who brandish our national flag in the global market do not deserve the same attention. Tchuruk should expect neither acknowledgment, nor congratulations or encouragement. He should consider himself happy that the merger has not triggered reactions from our national censors. Outside the cuts in personnel, there seems to be nothing else in the deal that might raise anyone's hackles. Patricia Russo has even decided to learn French! This is an example in capitalism, which does not upset our nationalistic sensitivity and could serve as a case study."

France: Political Crisis

"An Anti-model"

Pierre Haski in left-of-center Liberation (04/04): "Whatever the outcome of the conflict over the CPE, the final days of the 'French model' are near. Despite and because of his efforts, Villepin has in fact raised the question of method: the CPE will be remembered as the anti-model of social reform."

"Villepin's Woes"

Bruno Jeudy in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/04): "Yesterday Villepin lunched with his Polish counterpart who has worst woes than him. While France is not facing the dissolution of Parliament, Villepin would frankly like to get on with other things. It is clear that in the CPE battle pitting Villepin against the UMP leader Sarkozy, Villepin has lost a bundle. Sarkozy has taken over Villepin's beacon employment program with the firm intention of quickly resolving the crisis, including by repealing the legislation. Privately, Villepin concedes he has lost a set, but he has not given up winning the match." STAPLETON